



## About This Department...

"Lucky Bag" replaces the "Shore Things" and "Short Takes" that have appeared in previous issues. As defined in the Naval Terms Dictionary, "Lucky Bag" is a container or storage for articles found adrift. In this case, the term simply refers to a collection of articles that aren't quite long enough to be run as individual features.—Ed.

## Bump and Go Nets Trip to Jail

By AO3 James Dunn,  
FTC, San Diego

When faced with an important decision, I made the wrong choice, and now I have to wait for a court date to find out my punishment.

My problems started one February morning when I had to pick up furniture for the new command master chief. Because I had to go to the other side of the base, I used the squadron's duty truck. Two airmen were helping me.

After we had picked up the furniture at the resource building, one of the airmen said he needed something from his room in a nearby barracks—a stop that took only 10 minutes. I was backing out of a parking space when I felt a bump and stopped the truck to see what had happened (the furniture was blocking my view). I had hit the left front bumper of a civilian truck. However, I couldn't find any damage, so I decided to go back to the squadron.

About an hour later, I was doing another job when I was called to a parking area to answer some questions about the accident. A police officer was inspecting the truck when I got there and asked me if I knew who had been driving the truck about 1000 that

morning. I answered his question and immediately found myself in handcuffs. He then took me to the scene of the accident, where a witness was on hand. The witness said he couldn't identify the driver, but being the honest person I am, I answered up to the accusation.

The police officer took me to the precinct, where I was processed, given a ticket, and charged with hit and run. Nearly four hours later, I was released. I felt humiliated and foolish for making such a bad mistake. I had let a minor mishap turn into a major fiasco. ❌



*This Sailor could have avoided most of his problems by leaving a note with his name and phone number on the windshield of the civilian truck. Under most state laws, he then wouldn't have been charged with hit and run.—Michael Borkowski, traffic safety specialist, Shore Safety Programs.*

## "Five-Minute" Fire Takes 40 Minutes

By AWC(NAC) Peter Morin,  
VP-26

My first exposure to a "five-minute" fire came while attending Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) School. Our instructor gave us a scenario that went something like this: A member of our group has fallen into a stream and is shivering. Two of us have to start a fire in five minutes, without using birch bark. The temperature is 19 degrees F.

One of us broke out a sleeping bag, removed the victim's wet clothes, and climbed into the sleeping bag with the victim to warm him. Meanwhile, the two people assigned to start a fire gathered wood they found on the ground. Unfortunately, the wood was damp and wouldn't light.


After five minutes, the instructor told another person and me to help. I had a plastic bag of dry sticks I had collected during a trek the previous day. I used my survival knife to shave the small sticks, then tried to light them with my BIC lighter. The fire still wouldn't start, and the lighter was so hot it was burning my hand. I wished I had brought some old-

fashioned wooden matches.

Another 20 minutes passed without getting a fire started. It wasn't until we covered the wood shavings with sap from a fir tree that the fire finally started. Our next task was to keep the fire going. We added larger sticks, and, after about 40 minutes, we had a blazing fire.



This incident helped me realize the importance of being able to start a fire in a survival situation. Now, when I venture into the woods, I always carry some material (e.g., wooden matches or flint and steel, and a candle) that will ensure a fast fire.

Most people who attend SERE School have fond memories of the resistance phase of the training. I, however, never will forget the five-minute fire that took us 40 minutes to build. 

*The author was a PO1 assigned to VP-10 when he wrote this article.*

## ORM 101

By LCdr. T. X. Pham,  
VAW-117

Because I was going to spend a month in training at NAS Fallon, Nev., my wife decided to take our son to visit his grandparents in Europe. I planned to drive my family to the airport, then head west toward Fallon the following day. That plan, like most, didn't turn out the way I had intended.

The three-hour drive to the airport was uneventful, aside from a typical summer-afternoon thunderstorm that was building up. After the family had hugged, kissed and said our goodbyes, I was on the road. By now, the rain was coming down hard. My car had anti-lock brakes, so I wasn't worried about the rain. With visibility dropping, I continued traveling at a good rate of speed and was passing cars. I didn't know it, but I was heading blindly into trouble.

As I went into a curve, my car hydroplaned. I reacted by standing on the brakes without any concern they would lock up; after all, I had anti-lock brakes. But they did lock up, and the car immediately skidded sideways, rotating through 180 degrees. It then slammed into a concrete divider and came to rest in the left-hand breakdown lane, facing oncoming traffic. The glass panel behind the left rear-passenger seat had exploded, and the left rear wheel



had sheared off. Both bumpers also had become dislodged from the car's frame.

I sat there in silence for what seemed like an eternity, wondering if I still was alive. I suddenly realized I wasn't only alive, I wasn't even scratched. The only thing I felt was a sharp tug against the seat belt. I breathed a sigh of relief and called for a state trooper on my cellular phone.

I'm convinced it was overconfidence in my car's safety features that got me into trouble. Other than wearing my seat belt that day, I made a lot of mistakes, starting with the fact I didn't practice what I preach as a safety officer. I didn't apply the principles of operational risk management. If I had, I would have slowed down for the conditions or waited for them to improve. I also would have avoided having to write this article. 